

face great hardship if they do not receive the Secure Rural Schools payments they are owed. The last authorized Secure Rural Schools payment was distributed in FY 2016. Earlier this year, I joined my colleague Congresswoman CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS in introducing bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the program through FY 2017. I am frustrated the majority did not use this opportunity to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools program and provide certainty to the forest counties who rely on these funds to educate students.

I am also concerned that this bill limits public participation in the management of public lands. It reduces the consideration of forest management alternatives to two options—action or no action. It creates overly broad exclusions for projects to skirt environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act. In addition, it reduces opportunities for the public to engage meaningfully in these decisions. As a former consumer protection attorney, I am concerned about the inclusion of an arbitration pilot program that would force many challenges to federal forest management decisions to go through an agency-run arbitration process instead of through the judicial system.

We must manage our federal forests better, but we can do so without including these harmful provisions. I urge my colleagues to come back to the table and develop a more appropriate and effective solution.

#### RECOGNIZING THE RACHEL CARSON COUNCIL'S "BLAST ZONE" REPORT

##### HON. JAMIE RASKIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 8, 2017*

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the important work of the Rachel Carson Council (RCC). Based in Bethesda, Maryland, the RCC seeks to honor and promote the environmental ethic of former Silver Spring resident Rachel Carson by linking environmental, health, and social policy solutions "with the goal of building a more just, sustainable, and peaceful future."

The RCC has documented the political and economic forces propelling the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, while suggesting safer alternative solutions to build a clean and reliable energy portfolio. The Atlantic Coast Pipeline is a proposed \$5.5 billion, 600-mile project to move the supply of natural gas fractured from the Marcellus and Utica Shale Basins in Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania to meet growing energy demand in Virginia and North Carolina.

The RCC recently released a comprehensive report entitled, "Blast Zone: Natural Gas and the Atlantic Coast Pipeline." This report highlights the dangers of transporting natural gas and the underlying problems with existing natural gas fracturing methods, and it also questions the demand impetus for the project itself. Moreover, the report outlines serious attendant environmental and health risks, which they allege disproportionately affect minority communities and people living below the poverty line. For example, the RCC notes that in North Carolina, 30 out of 42 census tracts within one mile of the pipeline route have

higher minority levels, and 27 out of 42 tracts have higher poverty levels than the state average.

Natural gas has been touted as a bridge fuel, but RCC argues that methane leakage rates range from 3.8 percent to 12 percent, with methane nearly 100 times more effective at trapping heat in Earth's atmosphere over a 20-year lifecycle. With the methane leakage factored into an environmental analysis, RCC concludes that natural gas is even worse for the climate than coal, with a leakage rate of above 3.2 percent.

The dangers of natural gas extraction and transportation were vividly illustrated by California's Aliso Canyon disaster, which spewed 100,000 tons of methane into the atmosphere over a four-month period from 2015 into 2016. Unexpected earthquakes in Oklahoma have been attributed to fracking wastewater disposal practices, a bizarre development which calls the lifecycle of the process' ecological benefits into greater question.

Mr. Speaker, it is becoming impossible to ignore the imminent peril posed by natural gas extraction and transportation. I urge my colleagues to review the well-researched "Blast Zone" report produced by the RCC, and to come together across party lines to develop energy efficient policies that will protect our environment, our economy, and our collective future.

#### HONORING ROBERT L. SKEWES FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE NATION

##### HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 8, 2017*

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Robert Skewes upon his retirement from 48½ years of honorable service to the United States Coast Guard, and this great nation.

Mr. Skewes has served as the Chief, Office of Work-Life, within the Coast Guard's Health, Safety, and Work-Life Directorate, under the direction of the Assistant Commandant of Human Resources. In this role he established work-life policy and interpreted program standards for Coast Guard-wide implementation of a myriad of individual and family support services. These services included health promotion, food services, employee assistance, critical incident stress management, transition relocation assistance, personal financial management, adoption reimbursement, child and elder care, special needs for family members, family advocacy, addiction and substance abuse prevention, and sexual assault prevention including response.

Mr. Skewes is a 1973 graduate of the United States Coast Guard Academy. He began his Coast Guard career as an Engineering Officer and Damage Control Assistant aboard the USCG Cutter Hamilton in Boston, Massachusetts. Following a tour at the Coast Guard Headquarters Office of Research and Development, and postgraduate training at the University of Michigan, he was assigned to the Third Coast Guard District Merchant Marine Technical Branch at Governor's Island, New York, where he reviewed commercial vessel plans and specifications. In 1983, he was assigned to the Marine Inspection Office in New

Orleans, Louisiana, where he served as a Marine Inspector and Investigator, Administrative Officer, and Training Officer. From 1987 to 1990, Mr. Skewes was an instructor and Assistant Chief, Marine Safety Schools, at the Reserve Training Center in Yorktown, Virginia, where he was instrumental in the development and review of all marine safety program resident training. He served as the Executive Officer of the Marine Safety Office in Providence, RI, from 1990 to 1993, and as the Commanding Officer of the Marine Safety Office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from 1993 to 1995. From 1995 to 1999, as the Chief of the Office of Operating and Environmental Standards at Coast Guard Headquarters, Mr. Skewes was responsible for coordinating the development of international and domestic standards for personnel, vessels, facilities, hazardous materials, and environmental issues, and the activities of five industry Federal Advisory Committees. From 1999 to 2003, he served as the Chief, Office of Work-Life, the same position he currently holds. In July 2003, Mr. Skewes retired as a Captain following a 30-year career in the Coast Guard. From July 2003 to June 2007, he served as the Chief, Shore Safety Division within the Office of Safety and Environmental Health, at Coast Guard Headquarters, where he managed programs that focused on the safety concerns of personnel and their dependents that work and live at Coast Guard shore facilities as well as related safety concerns of personnel assigned to afloat units and aviation facilities. In this capacity, he provided oversight for a myriad of programs including risk management, emergency preparedness and response (including occupant emergency plans), traffic safety (including motor vehicles, motorcycles and trailering), fire prevention and safety, recreational safety, personal risk management and systems safety. Mr. Skewes has a Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering, and a Masters Degree in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering, from the University of Michigan. He also has a Bachelor's Degree in Ocean Science from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

#### RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF MAYPORT

##### HON. JOHN H. RUTHERFORD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 8, 2017*

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Naval Station Mayport as it marks 75 years of service to the United States Navy and our nation. This base was born of necessity during World War II and has served the United States Navy and our country almost continuously since. Today, it is one of the Navy's most valued and utilized military bases and is the country's third-largest naval surface fleet concentration area in the United States.

In April 1939, hearing that the Navy was looking to establish an aircraft carrier base on the East Coast of the United States, citizens of Duval County promised to purchase the land that would become home to Naval Station Mayport and give it to the Navy. In July of that year they passed a bond that enabled them to solidify the purchase. In December